

State Vocational Federation of Teachers

P.O. Box 290
Rocky Hill, CT 06067-0290

Ph: (860) 721-0317
1-800-378-8020
Fx: (860) 721-0323
Web Site: www.svft.org



Testimony of Jan Hochadel, Vice President

State Vocational Federation of Teachers, AFT Local 4200A

HB 6318 An Act Concerning Donations of Equipment to the Regional Vocational-Technical School System

Education Committee

February 23, 2011

As Vice President of the State Vocational Federation of Teachers, I am continually impressed by the efforts of our trade technology teachers to provide real-world experience for our students who are preparing to enter the Connecticut workforce. The process of analyzing problems, devising solutions, and then implementing those solutions cannot be replicated in the standard classroom. To a great extent, it is this opportunity that makes the Connecticut Technical School System so much more than an industrial arts program in the local high schools.

As the budgets for our trades become tighter and tighter, our instructors must become increasingly creative in finding ways to provide students the materials and experiences they need to meet the standards of expertise Connecticut manufacturers and businesses expect from CTHSS graduates. One way our instructors have gathered equipment and materials is to reach out to the business connections they have built over the years and requested donations. While many companies have been willing to provide the CTHSS the equipment, these companies understandably are unwilling to maintain legal liability for the equipment they donate.

This problem is especially true in the very successful airline mechanic programs the CTHSS has in Hartford and Stratford. Pratt and Whitney is one of many companies that has been willing to make significant donations of jet engines, but will not do so if the company maintains legal liability for the donations they make. The students are denied valuable practical experience while these donations sit in legal limbo.

For this reason, HB 6318 is an important step in providing our students the real-world experiences Connecticut businesses need and expect from our graduates. In these enormously difficult times, we should be trying to make private donations easier to make to our system. This proposed bill would eliminate the primary obstacle to companies making significant donations of equipment as a way of investing in our system. It would improve teaching and learning in technical education in our system and our state.

I urge you to support HB 6318. Thank you.